

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 139452

FOR JULIUS L KATZ

FOLLOWING REPEAT OTTAWA 2013 ACTION SECSTATE 26 JUNE 1974. QUOTE:

C O N F I D E N T I A L OTTAWA 2013

FOR RUFUS SMITH, EUR/CAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, CA

SUBJECT: DES BEEF CERTIFICATION

1. YESTERDAY AFTERNOON I HAD AN HOUR-LONG DISCUSSION OF THE DES BEEF CERTIFICATION PROBLEM WITH UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS RITCHIE. I STRESSED TO HIM THE STRONG PRESSURES ON THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION TO TAKE ACTION TO PROP UP THE SAGGING MEAT AND LIVESTOCK MARKET, THE FRUSTRATIONS IN WASHINGTON AT THE FAILURE TO REACH AGREEMENT ON A DES CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE THAT WOULD PERMIT U.S. BEEF TO MOVE INTO CANADA AGAIN, AND THE URGENT NEED TO FIND AN ACCOMMODATION IN ORDER TO FORESTALL COUNTERACTION ON OUR SIDE.

2. RITCHIE SPOKE STRONGLY IN DEFENSE OF THE GOC POSITION. HE SAID THAT PROBLEM CANNOT BE SOLVED
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UNLESS PROCEDURES FOUND THAT WILL GIVE REASONABLY

FIRM ASSURANCE THAT NO DES-TREATED BEEF WILL ENTER CANADA. THREE NECESSARY REQUIREMENTS IN GOC VIEW ARE PRE-SHIPMENT INSPECTION BY USDA REPEAT USDA OF FEED LOTS AND ON BASIS OF THIS INSPECTION DESIGNATION OF "APPROVED" OR "ACCEPTABLE" OPERATORS WHO ARE AWARE OF REGULATIONS AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO COMPLY, PERIODIC CHECKS TO BE CERTAIN OPERATORS ARE STILL REFRAINING FROM USE OF DES IN CANADA-BOUND CATTLE, AND SPECIFIED PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF REGULATIONS WHICH ARE ADEQUATELY SEVERE TO DETER VIOLATORS. RITCHIE EMPHASIZED THAT THERE IS NO DISAGREEMENT AMONG GOC MINISTRIES ON THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT REQUIREMENTS OF CANADIAN LAW MUST BE MET BEFORE U.S. BEEF CAN BE ADMITTED OR ON FACT THAT PROPOSALS MADE SO FAR BY U.S. DO NOT SATISFY REQUIREMENTS.

3. RITCHIE AND I THEN EXPLORED POSSIBILITY OF MEETING OF SENIOR LEVEL OFFICIALS OF TWO GOVERNMENTS, PERHAPS CHAIRED BY STATE AND EXTAFF, WHICH COULD TRY TO MOVE MATTERS FORWARD AND COULD PUT DISCUSSION INTO BROADER CONTEXT THAN HAD BEEN POSSIBLE IN TECHNICAL-LEVEL MEETINGS UP TO NOW. WE AGREED SUCH MEETING MIGHT BE USEFUL ALTHOUGH RITCHIE CAUTIONED THAT PUBLICITY WOULD HAVE TO BE HANDLED CAREFULLY IN PRESENT ELECTION ATMOSPHERE IN CANADA. GOC WOULD HAVE TO AVOID LEAVING ANY IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS RETREATING FROM INSISTENCE ON COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH REGULATIONS UNDER PRESSURE OR FOR "BROADER POLITICAL REASONS".

4. AT END OF DISCUSSION, RITCHIE UNDERTOOK TO CONSULT OTHER GOC MINISTRIES IMMEDIATELY TO SEE WHETHER GOC COULD FIELD A TEAM TO MEET WITH U.S. COUNTERPARTS IN OTTAWA ON FRIDAY JUNE 28 OR, IF THIS TOO SOON TO BE FEASIBLE, ON TUESDAY OR WEDNESDAY, JULY 2 OR 3. (JULY 1 IS CANADIAN NATIONAL HOLIDAY.) RITCHIE SAID HE WOULD GET BACK TO ME ON THIS ASAP. (AS OF NOON TODAY, EXTAFF INFORMED US THAT DEPUTY MINISTERS OF OTHER AGENCIES HAD BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSULTED AND WERE IN TURN ATTEMPTING TO CONTACT THEIR MINISTERS FOR GUIDANCE. EXTAFF HOPED TO HAVE ANSWERS BY THE END OF THE AFTERNOON.)

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH RITCHIE FORMALLY DENIED THAT ELECTION-PERIOD POLITICS WERE AT THE HEART OF THIS MATTER, IT WAS CLEAR FROM THE DISCUSSION THAT JULY 8 ELECTION DATE IS VERY MUCH IN MINDS OF GOC OFFICIALS

WHEN THEY DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM. I AM CONVINCED
THAT NO DECISION ON DES CERTIFICATION WILL BE MADE
BEFORE JULY 8. I AM ALSO CONVINCED THAT ANY RETALIATORY ACTION
BY U.S. BEFORE JULY 8 WILL BECOME CAUSE CELEBRE IN
CANADA AND HAVE SERIOUS ADVERSE IMPACT ON OUR BILATERAL
RELATIONS. I RECOMMEND THAT, IF RITCHIE COMES BACK
WITH AGREEMENT TO HOLD SENIOR LEVEL BILATERAL MEETING, U.S.
RESPOND POSITIVELY AND THAT WE DO OUR BEST TO KEEP
NEGOTIATIONS MOVING ON A POSITIVE TRACK FOR NEXT SEVERAL DAYS.
ONCE ELECTION DAY HAS PASSED, WE HOPEFULLY WILL HAVE
CLEARER IDEA OF WHAT CHANCES FOR ACCOMMODATION ARE
AND WILL BE ABLE TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE
COURSE OF ACTION IN LESS VOLATILE ATMOSPHERE. IN
MEANTIME, I REITERATE MY EARLIER RECOMMENDATION THAT
WE REFRAIN FROM PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT.

6. SUBSEQUENT TO DRAFTING OF ABOVE, EXTAFF INFORMED
ECON COUNSELOR THAT AGRICULTURE MINISTER WHELAN
CANNOT BE REACHED THIS AFTERNOON BUT THAT EXTAFF HOPES
TO BE ABLE TO GIVE US GOC DECISION EARLY TOMORROW
MORNING, JUNE 27.

PORTER

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